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I. SECRETARY-GENERAL WELCOMES LATEST ISRAEL-PLO AGREEMENT

The following statement was issued by the spokesman for Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali on 28 September 1995 (see SG/SM/5747-PAL/1822):

"The Secretary-General welcomes the signing today in Washington, D.C., of the latest agreement between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). He applauds the leaders of Israel and the PLO and their negotiating teams, whose resolve and dedication to peace helped to reach this agreement, which represents a further important step towards the full implementation of the Declaration of Principles.

"He hopes that this achievement will encourage progress in the Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Lebanese tracks of the Middle East peace process, leading to a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement based on United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

"The Secretary-General takes this opportunity to renew the firm commitment of the United Nations in support of the peace process. The programmes and agencies of the United Nations system will continue to provide all possible expertise and assistance in the field of economic and social development."

II. SECRETARY-GENERAL MEETS WITH CHAIRMAN ARAFAT OF THE PLO

This following statement was issued on 24 October 1995 by the spokesman for Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali (see SG/SM/5795):

"At 12.50 p.m. today, the Secretary-General received Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat. They discussed current developments in the Middle East peace process. They reviewed United Nations development assistance in Gaza, for which the PLO Chairman expressed his appreciation. The Secretary-General and Mr. Arafat also discussed the situation in Iraq.

"The Secretary-General thanked the PLO Chairman for his presence in New York to participate in the special commemorative meeting of the General Assembly marking the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations."

III. EXCERPT FROM THE REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION

The report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, submitted to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session, contained the following paragraphs relating to the question of Palestine (see A/50/1, paras. 736-743):

"In the course of the past year, significant results were achieved in the Middle East peace process, signalling the parties' continued commitment to proceed on the road to peace. An outstanding achievement was the conclusion, on 26 October 1994, of the historic Treaty of Peace between the State of Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. I warmly welcome this momentous agreement, which ended a decades-long state of war.

"Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) continued the implementation of their Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements, signed on 13 September 1993. By December 1994, the Palestine Authority, which had been established in May in most of the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area, was given responsibility for health, education, social welfare, tourism and direct taxation in the other areas of the West Bank. Israel and the PLO are at present negotiating the redeployment of Israeli military forces in the West Bank and the holding of elections for the Palestinian Council; interim understandings on an agreement have been reached by leaders on both sides.

"Meanwhile, multilateral negotiations on Middle East regional issues have proceeded, creating a network of common projects among countries in the region. The United Nations participates actively in the multilateral negotiations as a full extraregional participant.

"Hope has been generated by these encouraging signs that progress can be accelerated in the Israel-Lebanese and Israeli-Syrian negotiations leading to a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East, based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978).

"The Israeli-Palestinian peace talks have been complicated and set back, on more than one occasion, by terrorist attacks from enemies of peace in which dozens of civilians have been killed and wounded. I have condemned these incidents and I am encouraged by the determination of Israeli and Palestinian leaders to continue the peace process.

"In addition, concern in the international community has been generated by the Government of Israel's decisions to expropriate land and expand settlements in the occupied territories. The subject was taken up in deliberations in the Security Council at its formal meetings on 28 February 1993 and 12 May 1995.

"The peace process needs broad public support and without a visible improvement in the living conditions of the Palestinians this support will remain fragile. In this connection, I have to draw attention to the damaging effects which closures of the occupied territories by Israel have had on the nascent Palestinian economy.

"In its efforts to support the Arab-Israeli peace process, the United Nations has placed special emphasis on sustainable economic and social development in the occupied territories. The United Nations Special Coordinator, Mr. Terje Rod Larsen, has been active in strengthening local coordination between agencies and programmes of the United Nations system, the Bretton Woods institutions and the donor community. He works in close cooperation with the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction. The first results of the international assistance efforts are already visible, especially in institution-building and the infrastructure."

IV. COMMISSIONER-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST REPORTS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Commissioner-General of UNRWA submitted his annual report to the General Assembly (A/50/13). A number of other reports relevant to the same item were submitted by the Secretary-General. The item was allocated to the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) of the General Assembly. The reports were summarized as follows in a press release issued at Headquarters (GA/SPD/68):

"According to the Commissioner-General's report (A/50/13), the last year was marked by a further development of the Middle East peace process and a broadening of UNRWA's efforts to play an active role in the transitional period by bringing about

substantive improvements in the socio-economic conditions of Palestine refugees. Arrangements for Palestinian autonomy took a significant step forward with the evolution of the Palestinian Authority into a functioning administrative body with responsibility in the self-rule areas of the Gaza Strip and Jericho and a number of sectors of the West Bank. UNRWA and the Palestinian Authority, working closely together, focused on education, health, relief and social services in preparation for an eventual handover of services to the Authority. UNRWA also undertook longer-term socio-economic initiatives for the refugees and made considerable progress in relocating its Vienna headquarters to the Gaza Strip.

"Events during the year were underpinned by the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements, signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)in September 1993, and the Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area signed at Cairo on 4 May 1994. Following the redeployment of Israeli security forces away from the main population centres in the Gaza Strip and their withdrawal from the self-rule area of Jericho, the Chairman of the PLO arrived in the Gaza Strip in July 1994 and began exercising his duties as head of the Palestinian Authority.

"After the 29 August 1994 agreement on the preparatory transfer of powers and responsibilities, control over education, culture, health, social welfare, tourism and taxation passed from Israel to the Palestinian Authority, even as the greater part of the West Bank remained under Israeli control. The Gaza Strip became the focal point of UNRWA relations with the Palestinian leadership. For the first time, Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were able to manage their own affairs, albeit in limited spheres of civilian life. Thousands of refugees, mainly employees of the Palestinian Authority and members of the Palestinian Police Force and their families, returned to the areas.

"As of mid-1995, the report states, there were ongoing negotiations on the further redeployment of Israeli troops away from the civilian areas, the holding of Palestinian elections and the further release of Palestinian prisoners. Palestinians in the self-rule areas, who make up 22 per cent of refugees registered with UNRWA, were no longer subjected to daily curfews. Commercial activity had been restored to normal working hours and UNRWA schools, clinics and community centres functioned with minimal disruption for the first time since December 1987. The international community devoted unprecedented resources to improving infrastructure and promoting socio-economic development in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which had been long neglected.

"The development of an infrastructure to provide services for the refugee population remained a top UNRWA priority under its regular programmes and its Peace Implementation Programme (PIP), which was launched in October 1993. The Agency's most ambitious undertaking--a 232-bed Gaza General Hospital--was expected to be completed in early 1996. Construction also began on a College of Nursing and Allied Health Services that would be affiliated with the hospital. The Agency also began installation of a $4.3 million internal sewerage system in Beach camp to improve sanitation conditions for 63,000 residents. UNRWA also worked to improve and expand the infrastructure recently taken over by the Palestinian Authority from the Israeli Civil Administration, building a secondary school, renovating 14 Palestinian Authority schools, upgrading municipal garbage depository sites and undertaking maintenance on existing water and sewerage systems.

"The Agency attended the Multilateral Working Group on Refugees at Antalya, Turkey, in December 1994 and participated in inter-sessional technical meetings on family reunification, public health, databases and inventory of health to Palestinian refugees. It also worked closely with the Secretary-General's Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories and a number of United Nations agencies. By mid-1995, $4 million had been pledged or contributed allowing construction to begin on UNRWA's new headquarters in the Gaza Strip and the Commissioner-General opened

an office in Gaza in November 1994. By mid-1995, there were 16 headquarters staff in the West Bank and Gaza.

"According to the report, the final resolution of the refugee problem, the timing of the handover of UNRWA services to the Palestinian Authority and the dissolution of the Agency had caused uncertainty among the refugee community and Agency staff. With 21,000 employees and a well-established infrastructure and services, UNRWA was regarded as a force for stability.

"An informal meeting of donors at Amman in March 1995 agreed that UNRWA was a crucial element in the success of the peace process and no time-limit should be placed on its existence until a political solution to the refugee problem was found.

"UNRWA proposed a five-year financing and planning horizon to coincide with the interim period set out in the Declaration of Principles, the report continues. It was agreed that the eventual transfer of UNRWA's operations to the Palestinian Authority should be made when political, economic and financial conditions permitted, and at the Authority's request. Until then, the Agency should focus on the harmonization of services and coordination with other agencies operating in the field.

"Describing political conditions in the region, the report says that, despite significant progress in the implementation of the agreements between Israel and the PLO, conditions in the West Bank remained tense. The Agency was particularly concerned with the ongoing restriction on movement imposed by Israeli authorities.

"Palestinians holding identification cards from the West Bank and Gaza Strip were prohibited from entering East Jerusalem and Israel without a special permit. A separate permit was required for Palestinians to hold a job in Israel and travel to their place of work. Those measures restricted the flow of people, goods and services between the two areas and within the West Bank itself.

"On several occasions, Israeli authorities had sealed the West Bank and Gaza entirely, preventing those with valid permits from entering Israel and East Jerusalem. Following a bomb incident in Bei Lid on 22 January in which 21 Israelis were killed and 60 injured, the West Bank and Gaza were sealed completely for two weeks. After a 21 March incident in which a truck driver from the Gaza Strip tried to explode a bomb in Israel, temporary restrictions were imposed on the entry and exit of commodities from the Gaza Strip.

"The permit system and the intermittent sealing of the West Bank exacerbated the economic hardship there, states the report. As a significant proportion of the Palestinian labour force relied on employment in Israel, those measures had a direct impact on the income of thousands of families. In response, UNRWA undertook emergency food distributions in July 1994 and March 1995. The limited outbreak of cholera in the Gaza Strip in late 1994 was an example of the poor economic and social conditions in which the refugees lived. The Agency was concerned that, despite the international community's generous assistance for reconstruction and development, the continued lack of improvement in the socio-economic circumstances of refugees would jeopardize the peace process.

"Restriction on movement and security measures imposed by Israeli authorities continued to interfere with UNRWA's operations with undue delays at border crossings and searches of official vehicles and in one instance a diplomatic pouch was inspected. There were also lengthy delays in obtaining clearance from Israeli authorities for construction projects in the West Bank. UNRWA was deeply concerned with the nature and frequency of such incidents, particularly in view of the relocation of its headquarters to the Gaza Strip.

"The Commissioner-General reports that relations with Jordan remained 'excellent', as the Agency worked to build up its headquarters at Amman. Some 40 per cent of the refugees registered with UNRWA were located in Jordan, where they

benefited from Government services and enjoyed a relatively high degree of socio-economic well-being and security. The Jordanian Government and UNRWA worked together with the opening of government schools near refugee camps, alleviating overcrowding in Agency schools. However, there had been increased demand for special hardship assistance and medical care at Agency clinics.

"The Agency remained seriously concerned at the situation for Palestine refugees living in Lebanon, who faced serious constraints in finding jobs. The report noted the sharply increased need for funds for hospitalization and the problems of displaced Palestinian families. However, the Agency had completed a number of projects, including a sewerage system at Burj el-Barajneh camp and a multi-story housing project in the Ein el-Hilweh camp for 118 families. It had also received 1,600 more Palestinian pupils than in the 1994/95 academic year.

"In the Syrian Arab Republic, historically close ties with the Government contributed to the smooth functioning of UNRWA programmes. The Agency had worked closely with the Syrian Ministry of Health to coordinate measures for disease surveillance and control and arranged in-kind donations of medical supplies. The movement of refugees to the Gaza Strip and Jordan had led to a decreased school enrolment in UNRWA schools, although overcrowding was a severe problem.

"UNRWA continued to fulfil it basic mission to provide essential education, health and relief and social services to the 3.2 million Palestine refugees registered with the Agency in Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic and the West Bank and Gaza Strip. There were 408,861 elementary, preparatory and secondary pupils enrolled in UNRWA's 644 schools during the 1994/95 academic year and 4,568 participated in its vocational and technical courses at eight Agency training centres. University scholarships were awarded to 863 students.

"Refugees had guaranteed access to primary health care through the Agency's 123 health centres, including 76 dental clinics, as well as specialist clinics for paediatrics, diabetes, hypertension, cardiology, ophthalmology and obstetrics and gynaecology.

"An addendum to the report on financing contains information on the financial status of UNRWA in 1994, an assessment of the current financial situation in 1995 and the Agency's budget for 1996-1997, including an in-depth account of UNRWA's programmes. It also contains a short description of UNRWA's emergency operations and of its extrabudgetary activities.

"The addendum states that the activities of UNRWA are almost exclusively funded by voluntary contributions and only 92 of its 134 international posts, or about 3 per cent of its expenditures, are funded by the United Nations regular budget. In addition, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) fund several posts.

"Owing to the recent political developments that had made it possible to foresee the eventual dissolution of UNRWA, the addendum states that the Agency's 1996-1997 budget contains a provision in the amount of $12.7 million yearly for termination indemnities for its 21,000 area staff, which had been agreed upon by the Agency's major donor and host Governments at an informal meeting held at Amman in March 1995. The total amount required to cover the separation benefits is estimated at $127 million.

"The addendum states that the Agency's total General Fund budget for 1996-1997 amounts to $666.6 million, compared to the 1994-1995 budget of $632.2 million, representing an average annual increase of about 3 per cent. The growth rate represents the absolute minimum required to meet the increasing demand on the Agency's services caused by the natural growth of the refugee population and the necessity to cover minimal cost increases.

"Of the $632.2 million for 1994-1995, the 1995 portion amounted to $323.2

million -- $290.6 million for the General Fund, $17.2 million for ongoing activities, and $15.4 million for capital and special projects. In order to avoid a deterioration of its financial situation, austerity measures were introduced in 1993 and carried forward into 1995, which had a negative impact on the quality of UNRWA's services. At the end of July 1995, UNRWA's estimated 1995 deficit was $16 million, which, if realized, would completely exhaust the Agency's working capital.

"The report of the Secretary-General on offers by Member States of grants and scholarships for higher education, including vocational training, for Palestine refugees (A/50/450), states that in 1994-1995, Japan and Switzerland awarded scholarships to Palestine refugees through UNRWA's scholarship programme. In 1994, WHO received 42 applications from the West Bank and Gaza Strip for fellowships scheduled to begin in late 1995. Four scholarships were offered by the United World College of the Adriatic in Italy, Pearson College in Canada, Armand Hammer College in the United States of America and the Li Po Chun in Hong Kong in 1995.

"The Technical Assistance Programme of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) for the training of Palestinians was defined after a mission to the West Bank and Gaza Strip in March 1995. The Palestinian post office will be provided with two scholarships, one in the field of marketing and the other in the field of postal services, within the framework of UPU technical assistance to the Arab countries for 1995.

"The report of the Working Group on UNRWA financing (A/50/491) contains information on the origin and background of the Working Group, its activities during 1995, the financial situation of UNRWA and concluding remarks. It states that the working group held two meetings, on 14 September and 13 October 1995, to consider the recent developments in UNRWA's financial situation and to prepare its report to the General Assembly.

"The Working Group said it was concerned that UNRWA had been able to carry out its regular activities only by drawing on its working capital reserves in 1994 and the expected shortfall again in 1995. It expressed particular concern about the negative cumulative effect of austerity measures taken by the Agency to reduce its chronic budget deficits. It says it shares the Commissioner-General's concern that the education, health care and relief and social services to Palestine refugees were increasingly vulnerable due to the budget deficits.

"The Secretary-General's report on revenues derived from Palestine refugees' properties (A/50/428), states that he had received a reply from Israel dated 8 June 1995 in response to his request that the Israeli Government provide information on the steps it had taken to implement relevant provisions of General Assembly resolutions 49/35 A to G of 9 December 1994. In one resolution (49/35 F), the Assembly called upon Israel to render all facilities and assistance to the Secretary-General in protecting Arab property, assets and property rights in Israel and to establish a fund for the receipt of income derived on behalf of the rightful owners."

V. UNRWA COMMISSIONER-GENERAL AND UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES EXPRESS CONCERN FOR PLIGHT OF PALESTINIANS LEAVING THE LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA

The following is the text of a press release issued by UNRWA at Vienna on 13 September 1995 (see PAL/1821):

"The Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Ilter Türkmen, expressed his concern today about recent reports that Palestinians were having to leave the Libyan

Arab Jamahiriya. 'Once again, this illustrates the plight of Palestine refugees and focuses the legitimate concerns of the international community on their situation', Mr. Türkmen said.

"According to the information currently available to the Agency, as a result of the Libyan action, several countries in UNRWA's area of operations are now imposing restrictions on the entry of Palestinians. Even Palestinians who have rights of residence have been prevented from returning to their homes. The Commissioner-General pointed out that while those matters were within the jurisdiction of the sovereign States concerned, the humanitarian dimension of this developing situation calls for immediate attention. 'The Agency stands ready to provide its humanitarian services to those Palestine refugees registered with UNRWA in its area of operations', Mr. Türkmen said.

"The Commissioner-General said that the Agency would strive whenever possible to prevent hardship to the refugees, by way of intervention with the Governments concerned, where necessary together with other relevant United Nations organizations. As always, the humanitarian services which UNRWA extends to the Palestine refugees are provided in close coordination with the governments concerned."

Subsequently, on 29 September 1995, the following press release was issued by UNRWA and UNHCR at Geneva and Vienna (see PAL/1823-REF/1122):

"In an unprecedented joint statement issued today at Geneva and Vienna, the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Ilter Türkmen, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Sadako Ogata, urged the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and other Governments in the Middle East to 'redouble their efforts' to resolve the current crisis facing Palestinian refugees who are being expelled from the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya or forced to live in desert camps that were reportedly being set up near Tobruk. The two agency heads called on the Libyan authorities and other affected Governments in the Middle East 'to exercise compassion and restraint in handling the matter and to re-double their efforts to resolve the current problem'.

"Many of them affected do not possess rights of residence elsewhere and other countries in the region are maintaining additional restrictions on their entry and movement. Accordingly, having left their homes and jobs, entire families have been forced to live in temporary camps on the Libyan border and have been stranded at other international borders. UNHCR and UNRWA have given assistance in order to ease the plight of these refugees, both by providing food and shelter to those at border crossing points, and by interceding on a humanitarian basis with other States in the region in order to obtain transit and residence facilities.

"Thirty-two Palestinians are now stuck in the no-man's land at Assaloum on the Egyptian/Libyan border, including several small children and a five-month-old baby. Another 36 are stranded in the town of Rafah next to the border between Egypt and Gaza. Reports coming out of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya suggest that a further 1,500 Palestinians are currently being relocated from their homes to one or more camps in the Tobruk area, some 150 kilometres from the Egyptian border. Some 30,000 Palestinians were believed to be living in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya before the recent expulsions began.

"'I am extremely concerned about the immense difficulties which these Palestinians may face', said Mrs. Ogata, shortly after the statement was released. 'To condemn them to a nebulous existence in closed camps or in no-man's land is scarcely a satisfactory solution to the complex situation affecting Palestinian refugees in North Africa and the Middle East. I urge the Libyan Government to reconsider the current wave of forced relocations and expulsions, and call upon other Governments to find a speedy solution to the resulting humanitarian problems.'"

VI. PLO CHAIRMAN ARAFAT TO INAUGURATE UNESCO-DESIGNED SCHOOL IN GAZA

The following is the text of a press release issued by UNESCO on 11 September 1995 (see OPI/NYO/95-9G):

"In a first step toward a new unified education system for Palestinians, Yasser Arafat, President of the Palestinian Authority, will inaugurate tomorrow a UNESCO-designed model kindergarten in the Jabaliya section of Gaza City.

"Special Ambassador for Children in Need, U. H. Ohoven, a German citizen who led private fund-raising for the project, will represent UNESCO at the inauguration. 'We hope that this new school will be the first of many', said Ms. Ohoven, 'so that Palestinian children can benefit from peace and receive the best possible education.'

"UNESCO helped develop the school's curriculum and advised on its architecture. 'There are other Palestinian kindergartens', says Omar Massalha, director of the Organization's Coordination Unit for Assistance to the Palestinian People. 'But they are in private hands. This is the first public kindergarten there, and its curriculum will be oriented towards peace.'

"Palestinians have no national school curriculum at present. They use a Jordanian one in the West Bank and an Egyptian one in the Gaza Strip. Thus this kindergarten begins the process of creating a unified national programme of studies. This is being worked out at the Palestinian Curriculum Development Centre, which was established with UNESCO assistance and Italian funding.

"Germany's Daimler-Benz A.G. provided the main funding for the school, which will accommodate 50 children and include a training facility for 15 teachers. The German state of Baden-Württemberg donated interior furnishings. Matthias Kleinert, a Daimler-Benz senior executive, and Dieter Spöri, Economics Minister of Baden-Württemberg, will also attend the inauguration.

"The school is located in a new residential complex comprising apartment blocks and a hospital on land donated by the Palestinian Ministry of Housing. It is the result of Daimler-Benz's offer to finance a kindergarten during President Arafat's visit to Stuttgart, home of the automaker's headquarters, in May 1994.

"In its ongoing aid to Palestinian education, UNESCO is renovating 17 schools in a US$2.5 million programme funded by Saudi Arabia. The Organization is also training Palestinian Ministry of Education officials in administration and planning, with Italian financial support."

VII. EXCERPTS FROM THE PRESS COMMUNIQUÉ ISSUED BY THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL OF THE GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL AT ITS FIFTY-SIXTH SESSION HELD ON 18 AND 19 SEPTEMBER 1995

The Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) held its fifty-sixth regular session at the seat of its secretariat in Riyadh on 18 and 19 September 1995 under the chairmanship of its current Chairman, His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed Bib Mubarak Al Khalifa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bahrain. The following are excerpts from the press communiqué issued by the Ministerial Council (see A/50/466-S/1995/817):

"The Council reviewed the developments that had taken place in connection with the Middle East peace process and again expressed the hope that it would achieve its stated objective of establishing a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region that would ensure a complete Israeli withdrawal from the city

of Jerusalem and all the occupied Arab territories and the restoration of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to establish an independent State on its own national soil. The Council noted with concern that Israel was continuing to obstruct the exercise by the Palestinian Authority of its functions. The Council expresses the hope that the peace process will be carried through following the conclusion of the second stage of the Declaration of Principles agreement, that concerning the expanded scope of autonomy. The Council calls for the intervention of the co-sponsors of the peace process and of the international community in order to ensure that Israel abides by the spirit and letter of the bilateral agreements reached with the Palestinians, that it implements those agreements in accordance with the established timetable, that it removes the obstacles to the ongoing negotiations by, for example, withdrawing the occupation forces from the city of Hebron, that it desists from expropriating Palestinian land and all other practices incompatible with the peacemoves in the region, and that it takes immediate and decisive measures to halt the attacks and terrorist acts being committed by Israeli settlers against Palestinian citizens in the occupied West Bank. The Council further calls upon the international community to exert pressure on Israel to comply with the provisions of the fourth Geneva Convention.

"The Ministerial Council renews its call to the Security Council to take all appropriate measures to compel Israel to refrain from altering the geographical and demographic character of the city of Jerusalem within its boundaries as of 4 June 1967 and to ensure that Israel complies with the United Nations resolutions relating to Jerusalem, especially Security Council resolution 252 (1968)."

VIII. PRESS COMMUNIQUÉ FROM THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE COMMITTEE OF SIX ON PALESTINE ISSUED ON 27 SEPTEMBER 1995

The following is the text of a press communiqué issued by the Organization of the Islamic Conference Committee of Six on Palestine which met at United Nations Headquarters on 27 September 1995.

"The Organization of the Islamic Conference Committee of Six on Palestine met today at United Nations Headquarters in New York, under the Chairmanship of His Excellency Dr. Hamid Algabid, Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). The meeting was attended by the Foreign Ministers of Palestine, Senegal, Malaysia and Pakistan, as well as by the representatives of Guinea and Morocco.

"In his introductory statement to the Committee, the Secretary-General welcomed the recent agreement concluded at Taba on the extension of Palestinian self-rule and emphasized that this accord constituted a step forward in the peace process. He stated, however, that the peace process would be long and urged that increased efforts be made to settle all outstanding fundamental issues.

"The Secretary-General further stressed that the question of Al-Quds al-Sharif, the release of all Palestinian prisoners and implementation of all commitments were of vital importance for the international community, and especially for the Islamic Ummah.

"The Secretary-General launched an appeal to all Member States to extend their support to the Palestinian National Authority during this crucial phase in the peace process.

"The Committee held a detailed exchange of views on current developments relating to the Palestinian question. It reiterated the total commitment of OIC in support of the cause of Palestine and Al-Quds al-Sharif which remain the foremost cause of all Muslims. The Committee also emphasized the necessity of achieving a just

and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

"At the end of its deliberations, the Committee agreed on a number of recommendations aimed at coordinating the position of the States members of OIC with regard to the Palestinian question during the current session of the United Nations General Assembly.

"These recommendations will be submitted to the annual coordination meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of OIC to be held on 2 October 1995 in New York."

IX. GERMANY AND JAPAN EXTEND SUPPORT TO PALESTINE REFUGEES

The following is the text of a press release issued on 14 September 1995 by the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations (see 45/95):

"The German Government attaches great importance to the unimpeded continuation of the peace process in the Middle East. To keep up the momentum of the peace process, the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs decided to contribute DM 6.5 million (approximately US$ 4.3 million) to the elementary and preparatory education programme for Palestinian refugees (including the Wadi Seer Training Centre in Jordan), which is implemented by UNRWA.

"Within this contribution Germany continues its efforts to alleviate the fate of refugees in the Near East in cooperation with UNRWA. German contributions to UNRWA educational programmes have added up to more than DM 181 million (approximately US$ 122 million) since 1970."

The following press release regarding Japan's contribution was issued on 12 September 1995 by UNRWA at Vienna (see PAL/1820):

"The Government of Japan has pledged $18 million to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) for 1995. The pledge includes $11 million for the Agency's regular programme in 1995 and $500,000 for university scholarships for Palestine refugee students.

"Japan had also pledged $6.5 million to the Agency's Peace Implementation Programme, including $4.2 million for the Gaza Strip to construct and equip three new schools and to improve sewerage and drainage in Beach camp. The balance of $2.3 million has been allocated to projects of the Programme in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the West Bank.

"Projects include constructing and equipping libraries and science laboratories in UNRWA schools and upgrading workshop equipment at the Agency's Wadi Seer Training Centre in Jordan, upgrading solid waste disposal equipment and improving water supply for refugee camps in Syria, as well as other projects in Lebanon and the West Bank.

"The Government of Japan earlier contributed food assistance to UNRWA valued at about $9.1 million for 1995 and contributed $2 million towards the relocation of the Agency's headquarters to the area of operations. The new pledge brings Japan's 1995 pledges and contributions to $29.1 million.

"In 1994 Japan ranked as the second-largest single donor country to UNRWA after the United States. With this pledge, Japan is also the second largest donor for phase II of the Peace Implementation Programme."

X. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS: ACTIVITIES AND INFORMATION

1. Report on Israeli Settlement in the Occupied Territories, a bimonthly publication of the Foundation for Middle East Peace, is available from 555 13th Street, NW, Suite 800, Washington, D.C. 20004-1109 (fax No. 202 637 5910). Issue No. 5, vol. 5 of September 1995 includes articles on the difficulties of expanding Palestinian authority in the West Bank, including plans on how to divide the territory; principles guiding an interim agreement signed in August 1995; and the continuation of annexation of the West Bank and escalation of housing construction.

2. Middle East International, a biweekly publication, is available from P.O. Box 53365, Temple Heights Station, Washington, D.C. 20009. Issue No. 508 of 8 September 1995 includes articles on the implementation of security and intelligence functions by the Palestinian Authority; Ariel Sharon's unsuccessful hunger strike to protest redeployment of the Israeli Defence Forces; the debate on the need for and fairness of Palestinian elections; and political sub-groups within the settler movement. Issue No. 509 of 22 September 1995 includes articles on the Hebron settlers blocking the agreement on the second phase of the Declaration of Principles; the Libyan expulsion of Palestinians; the Israeli right-wing's exploitation of Hamas; and the debate on principles regarding the water supply for Palestinians and settlers. Issue No. 511 of 20 October 1995 includes an editorial on democracy and the Arab world; the redeployment of Israeli forces and the release of Palestinian prisoners; signs of rapprochement between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority; the Likud Party and extremist groups; initiatives in the United States Senate to move the American Embassy to Jerusalem; preparations for Palestinian elections; the United States Government's arrest of Hamas' Musa Abu Marzuq; and a review of Sara Roy's book entitled The Gaza Strip: the political economy and development.

3. The Other Front, a weekly bulletin on developments in Israeli society, is available from P.O. Box 19543, Jerusalem. Issue No. 37 of 3 September 1995 includes articles on Jerusalem Mayor Olmert's failed attempts to get artists' support for a "unified" Jerusalem as Israel's capital; ultra-Orthodox Jews in Jerusalem; Israel's projected expenditure for building settlements; and the continuing problems of Palestinian schools. Issue No. 342 of 29 October 1995 includes articles on the declining confidence of the Israeli public in the Israeli Defence Forces; Israeli Minister of the Interior Ehud Barak's view on reducing the number of Palestinian workers to "almost nothing"; the dropout rate of Palestinian students in Israel; the Oslo II Agreement and the various plans (maps) for the occupied territories; the bypass roads and the settlement of Maaleh Adumim; and protests against the Hebron bypass road.

4. News From Within, a newsletter of the Alternative Information Centre, is available from P.O. Box 31417, Jerusalem (Fax 9722 253151). Issue No. 9 of September 1995 includes articles on the ramifications of the Taba Agreement on issues concerning water, Hebron, military operations of Hamas, Jericho and Israeli settlers; an interview with Dr. Abdel-Sitar Qassem, political science professor of Al-Najah University and vocal critic of the peace accords; the current status of Hebron in the negotiations; the influence of Fatah over the opposition; the massacre of prisoners of war by Israeli soldiers during the wars of 1956, 1967 and 1973; the social effects of the intifadah in Jalazone Refugee Camp on women, marriage and family; and the structure of Palestinian society based on the "hamula". Issue No. 10 of October 1995 includes articles on the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the peace accords; reactions of Palestinian public opinion and the Israeli right on the Taba Agreement; attack of settlers on a Palestinian girls' school in Hebron; the World Bank's policy on the Palestinian self-rule areas; an examination of the Palestinian Authority's political parties' law; and a report of a Palestinian participant in the Fourth World Conference on Women held at Beijing.

5. April 17 Bulletin, a quarterly publication that focuses on Palestinian political prisoners, is available from the Alternative Information Centre, P.O. Box 31417, Jerusalem (fax No. 9722 253151). The issue, covering the period 25 April to 12 October 1995, includes information on the release of prisoners, prison conditions, administrative detentions, torture and interrogation, Palestinian prisoners' hunger strike, sick prisoners, prisoner statistics, mass

transfers, debate over extradition and women prisoners.

6. Al-Haq, an affiliate of the International Commission of Jurists, has published press releases on the death of Azam Abd-al-Rahim, on the situation of Palestinians leaving the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, and on deaths in detention during the month of October 1995. Copies are available from P.O. Box 1413, Ramallah, West Bank (fax No. 972-2 995194).

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